

REMARKS

Claims 1-3 remain pending. Claims 1 and 2 are currently amended. No claims are canceled or added.

Claims 1 and 3 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Okita et al. (JP 2002-127817). Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection should be withdrawn.

Figs. 8 and 9 of Okita et al. disclose illumination sequences in which only one lamp of the indicator display is illuminated at a time. Paragraph [0014] discloses an alternative embodiment in which most lights remain illuminated, but one light at a time is not illuminated.

Neither of the Okita et al. illumination sequences indicates turn direction as easily as those disclosed by applicants. For example, applicants' Figs. 4A and 4B present illumination sequences in which each lamp, after becoming lit, remains lit when the next light becomes lit, until all the lights are lit. Applicants explain in their disclosure, page 4, lines 5-10, that such illumination sequence provides an indication of winker operation with a visibility that is more favorably perceived than that of the prior art. Claim 1 is now amended to describe this illumination sequence. Claim 3 depends claim 1, so claim 3 also describes this illumination sequence.

Because Okita et al. does not teach the illumination sequence now described in claims 1 and 3, applicants request that the anticipation rejection be withdrawn.

Claim 2 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as obvious over Okita et al. Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Claim 2 describes an electric vehicle, which, when indicating a turn, "the lamps are turned off all at once" and then lit up in the incremental sequence. Okita et al. does not teach or suggest an electric vehicle with this feature.

Accordingly to the Office Action, page 3, first paragraph, the rejection is based on Okita et al. teaching this feature. However, the Office Action does not cite where in the Okita et al. disclosure this feature is supposedly taught. Therefore, the rejection has not been justified.

The claimed feature of the lamps being turned off all at once is not inherent, because certainly an illumination sequence does not require this pattern. Further, the Office Action provides no explanation of why the claimed feature could fairly be regarded as obvious.

In view of the absence in the Office Action of any discussion of the cited feature explicitly recited in the claim, applicant submits that the obviousness rejection is not justified and should be withdrawn.

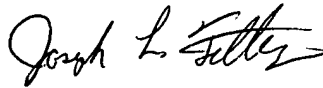
Originally, claim 2 depended from claim 1. Now, claim 2 is rewritten in independent form but without the additional text now added to claim 1.

In a separate matter, applicants amend the specification and the Abstract to address minor informalities.

In view of the remarks above, applicants now submit that the application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, a Notice of Allowability is hereby requested. If for any reason it is believed that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for disposition of this case.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, applicants petition for an appropriate extension of time. The fees for such an extension, or any other fees which may be due, may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-2866.

Respectfully submitted,
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